

AUG 23 2016

EPA-REGION 10

August 19, 2016

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U.S. EPA  
ATTN: Harbor Comments  
805 SW Broadway, Suite 500  
Portland, OR 97205

I am a Portland resident who does not believe that the EPA's current plan to clean the Willamette River is the best course of action. Their suggested plan will cost the Portland community millions of dollars and leave the Willamette unusable for years, maybe decades. The plan could also leave the river in an even worse condition.

The EPA wants to spend at least \$746 million dollars to dredge the Portland Harbor and transport 1.9 million cubic yards of contaminated sediment to a landfill. That is a lot of money that does not need to be spent, especially since the project could cost even more than what has been estimated. The money to pay for this project would be raised through increased taxes, and like many Oregon residents, we really cannot afford to have our taxes go up. This project would not only hurt residents through increased taxes, but it would also be hard on the local economy. Many businesses and jobs rely on the Portland Harbor. The EPA's plan would make this section of the River unusable and unattractive. If people can't use the river for recreational purposes, they won't go to that area at all, which will also hurt waterfront businesses like restaurants. If the Willamette River is dredged, many of these businesses will suffer and jobs will be lost. This would affect all of us.

Not only would this plan be costly and hurt the local economy, but it might not even work. Studies from 2014 show that the contamination has actually been reduced by 40% through natural processes, but the EPA has not taken this new and important data into consideration. Disturbing already buried contaminated sediment through dredging could not only make the pollution worse, it could also expose residents to the pollution. If the contamination level has gone down, we should simply leave the river alone and wait to see if it continues to go down. Why bother it now that natural processes are at work? It would be a good idea to instead focus on the highly contaminated areas that the EPA has already identified and then reassess the entire project.

I have lived in Portland for thirty two years, and believe that I and other Portland residents deserve a say in what happens in our community. Anything that hurts one segment of Portland's economy will affect everyone, and that is why I think the EPA's plan should not move forward. Our city deserves a cost-effective and less invasive plan that will not harm local businesses and will respect the natural processes that are already reducing the river's contamination.

Thank you,

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Portland, OR 97220